

THE SCHOLAR IN AMERICA.

His Real Value Is Not Appreciated by the Masses of the People.

In his judgment of the scholar the average American citizen has usually only one definite idea—that he is a dreamer quite out of contact with actual life. Consider for a moment the genuine amazement and dismay with which the average citizen regards a serious attempt on the part of educated men to exert their due influence in the solution of a great political or economic problem. He seems to look upon them somewhat as he would watch a group of monkeys escaped from their cage and engaged in some mischief, the effects of which they cannot be made to comprehend; or, to substitute a simile somewhat more complimentary, that of a group of excited passengers had attempted to dictate the management of a great ocean steamer.

Of course no such view of scholarly activity in the political field will be submitted to. The men who devote their lives to the study of the records of human experience as transmitted in history and literature have not less, but infinitely more, claim to be heard on any important subject than those engaged only in the vulgar scramble for wealth. Emerson's brief essay on politics outweighs and will outlast all the floods of campaign literature and selfish demagogic eloquence which have so often since then deluged the land.

But is there one of the older civilized countries where the organs of the horde of money getters would dare to stigmatize the whole class of liberally educated men as visionary theorists? Imagine a university education regarded in England as a disqualification for high public office! Even in Germany, where political leaders and great scholars seem more nearly the representative men of two distinct castes, the illustrious double career of a Moltke shows that the gap is not yet impassable. The condition of things among ourselves is an alarming symptom, indicating how far the most highly educated and wisest men have lost their proper leadership in the national councils and the national life.

Now, do the colleges, and the limited body of cultivated, reflective and earnest scholars generally, appeal as directly and sensibly to the average American as they could and should? Among the philosophic few it is an axiom which one rarely thinks of questioning, that wider knowledge, closer contact with the wise and good of all ages, the assimilation of their best thoughts, the contemplation of their glorious deeds, are the employments which ennoble young and old and make men truly happy.

But the typical American, as Professor Shaler has clearly set forth, is only dimly conscious of the achievements of other races and peoples in the past or present. He is a prisoner of overwhelming inertia to teach us he certainly does not believe. That this poetry, the architecture, the plastic arts, can be used to make life more beautiful, more happy, better worth living, he understands at best very imperfectly. Perhaps he is open to conversion. Is a proper effort being exerted to make him realize all this? American men read to a moderate extent. The women of America have large leisure, a liberal share of influence in home and social life, and surely, also, a lofty consciousness of their duty as mothers of the race that is to be. To them, it may be chiefly, we may hopefully appeal.

Again, there is a widespread feeling that American literature is not holding the height attained in the last generation. The subject is quite too large for a reviewer, possibly rather too serious for a professional optimist. But if our literature is losing, or in danger of losing its vital power, its hold on the national power, may we not find a partial explanation in the fact that a great body of men, claiming, no doubt justly, that they have accumulated knowledge worthy to be widely disseminated, nevertheless disdain to learn and practice the art of adequate and graceful expression—Atlantic Monthly.

Dancing with Foreigners.

The French and Austrian men-of-war which visited Newport this summer added not a little to the gaiety of the early season, writes a Newport correspondent. Entertainments were given in their honor on board ship and elsewhere, and the officers, it is said, with the susceptibility characteristic of their profession, admired our pretty young girls very much. Their method of dancing was not, however, calculated to recommend them to the American feminine heart. Whatever may be the defects of our new world civilization, we have made vast improvements in the art of dancing. Our young ladies, accustomed to the graceful American methods, were quite overpowered at the manner in which these foreign officers pranced up and down the decks, never reversing and stopping the dance with such suddenness that their partners, dizzy with the rapid motion, were obliged to grasp at gun carriages, railings or any near object in order to avoid falling. One young girl told the writer that she did not recover from the fatigue of dancing with these foreign partners for two or three days, although she was a buxom and hearty looking maiden.—Chicago Herald.

A new imperial train has just been built for the emperor of Russia. The saloons are covered with gold, and instead of the steel plates with which the carriages of the old train were protected. All the saloons, which communicate by covered passages, are exactly the same in outward appearance, so that no outsider may be able to discover in which carriage the czar is traveling.

On a farm at Unadilla, Mich., war broke out between the bees and the turkeys, and seventeen of the latter were stung to death before the cessation of hostilities.

A Valuable Book.

There are many venerable stock jokes founded, and well founded, on the red tape, circumlocution and general obfuscation that prevail in the public service bureau of Old World governments. A notable contrast is presented in at least one department of our own government—the post-office. An enterprising tradesman soliciting custom could scarcely find his patrons with more practical and complete information than the postal department gives to the public in the "United States Official Postal Guide." There is not a point concerning the service, domestic or foreign, which any one can wish to know, whether it be to whom to apply for an office, or the postage rate on manuscript sermons to Ministers of the Gospel, or the amount of the Total Week P. O. in Arizona, that is not set forth and elucidated in such a simple and yet comprehensive way that any letter writing man, even though he be a Mugwump, cannot err therein. It is a monthly handbook of great value to every one who makes any extended use of the mails.—New York Tribune

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